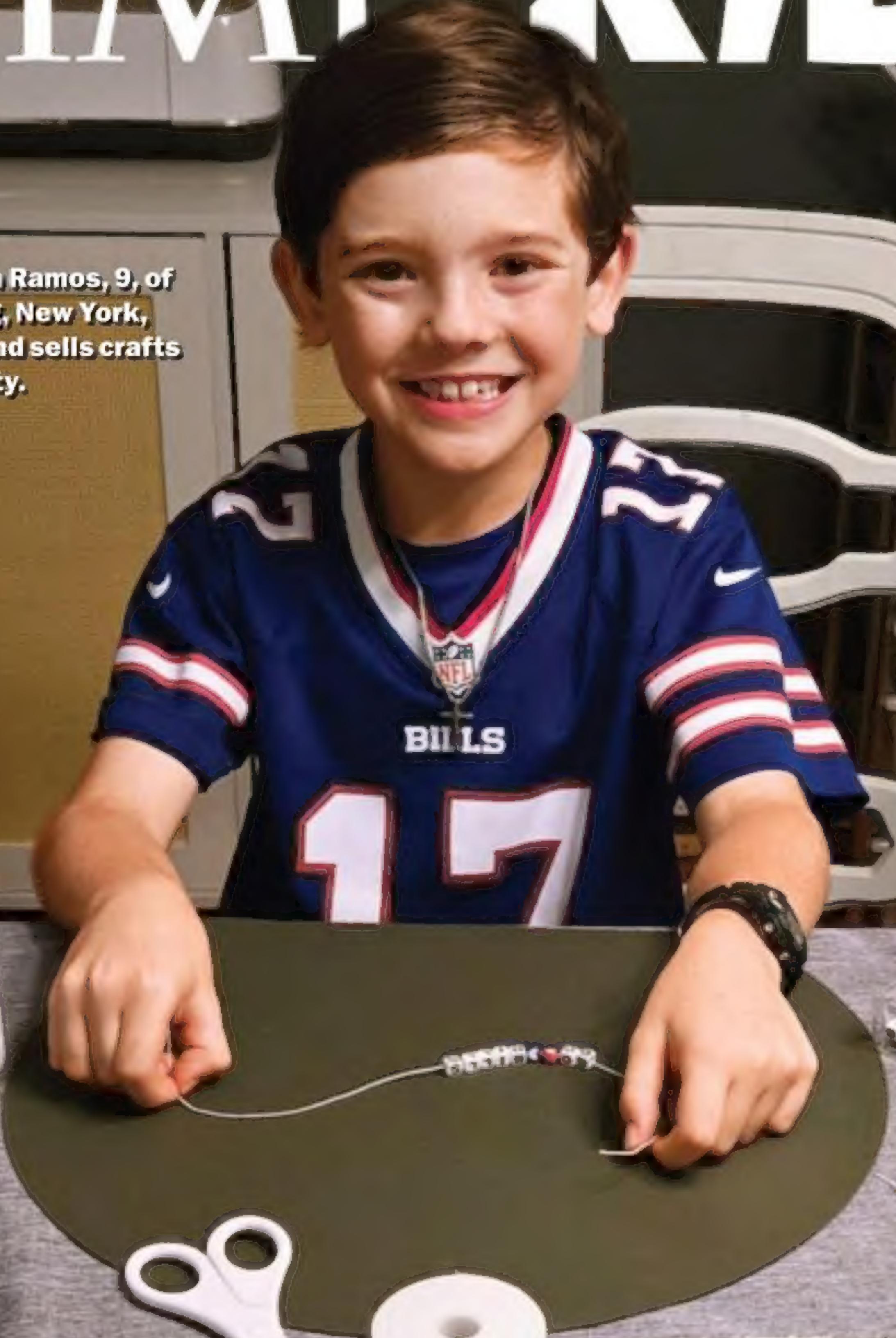


TIME KIDS

Christian Ramos, 9, of
Hamburg, New York,
makes and sells crafts
for charity.



FUNDRAISING FAN

Christian, TFK's Kid of the Month, has found a creative way to raise money for a good cause.



ELECTION 2024

Every four years, Americans decide who will be the next president of the United States. This year, Election Day is Tuesday, November 5. The time leading up to the presidential election will be busy and exciting. We've explained some of the key words and phrases you'll need to know as the adults around you get ready to cast their vote.

—By Allison Singer and Lillian Stone



★ CANDIDATE noun: a person who is running for office ★

The winner of the presidential election will lead the United States for the next four years. There are two main candidates for the job: Kamala Harris and Donald Trump.

Trump represents the Republican Party. He won the 2016 presidential election, and served as president of the U.S. for one term, from 2017 to 2021. U.S. presidents can serve two terms. If Trump is reelected, he'll serve in the White House for four more years.

Harris represents the Democratic Party. She's the U.S. vice president, and serves alongside President Joe Biden. Harris became a candidate later than usual. Biden was the Democratic nominee until he dropped out of the race on July 21. Harris became the party's choice soon after.

Both Trump and Harris are traveling around the country, visiting big cities and small towns. They're making appearances, giving speeches, and talking about their ideas as they try to win votes.



PETER ZAY—ANADOLU/GETTY IMAGES

JUSTIN SULLIVAN—GETTY IMAGES

★ BALLOT noun: a list of choices in an election ★

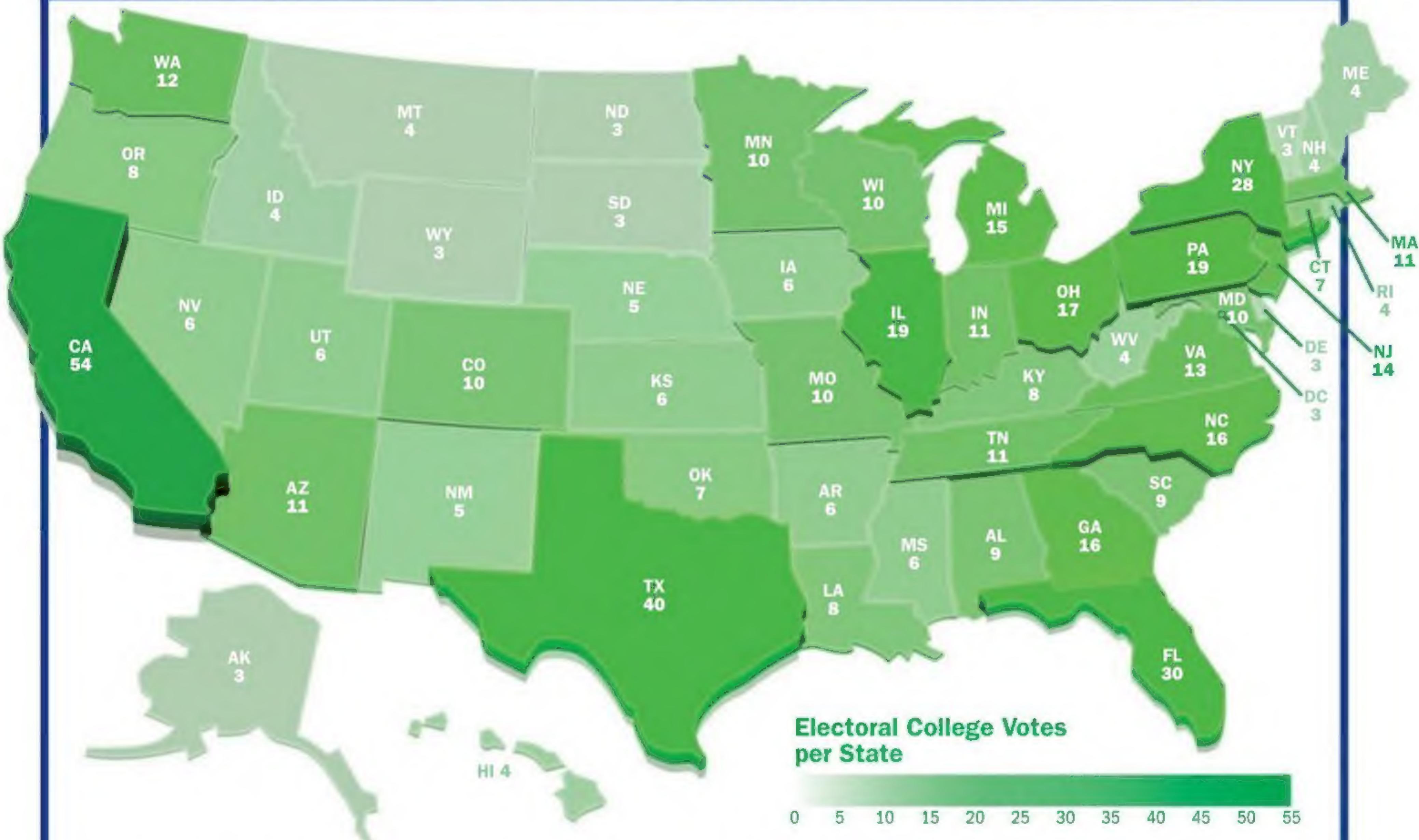


Picking the next president isn't the only important choice American voters are making in this year's election. U.S. elections operate using a ballot system. A ballot is a list of choices for voters to make.

The ballot for this year's election lists the candidates who are running for president. It lists the candidates running for other offices, too, such as judges and senators. Ballots also include issues that affect a person's town or state, such as raising taxes. People can vote yes or no on these community issues.

Many voters fill in their ballot on Election Day. Volunteers distribute them at polling places, such as schools and libraries, where people line up to cast their votes. But there are other ways to vote. Some people are voting early. They are visiting polling places early, or submitting their ballots by mail. These votes count just the same as in-person votes on Election Day.

★ ELECTORAL COLLEGE *noun*: the group that elects the president ★



In most elections, the person with the most votes wins. But when it comes to picking a U.S. president, things aren't so simple. Even after a winner is declared, it will be weeks before a group of 538 people called the electoral college actually elects the president.

Here's how it works. A state gets electoral votes equal to the number of its members of Congress, which

includes the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each state gets one vote apiece for its two senators. This never changes. It also gets one vote for each of its members of the House of Representatives. That number is based on the state's population. Though not a state, Washington, D.C., gets electoral votes too.

A candidate needs at least 270

electoral votes to win. In 48 states (and D.C.), the winner of the popular vote gets all of that state's electoral votes. In Maine and Nebraska, electoral votes can be split.

Many people think it would be more fair if the popular vote decided elections. Others think the electoral college keeps highly populated states from having too much power. What do you think?

ALASKA AND HAWAII ARE NOT SHOWN IN POSITION OR TO SCALE.

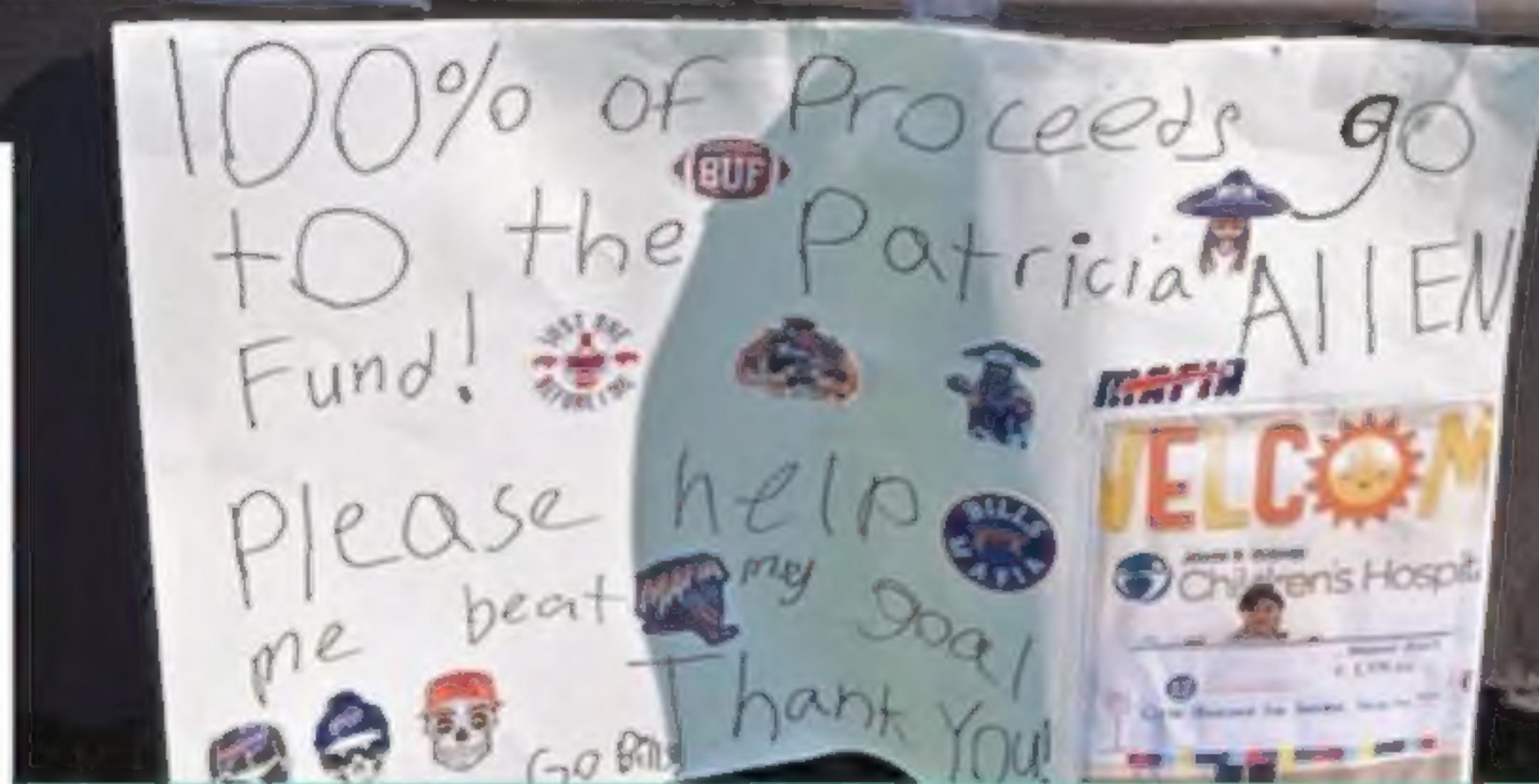
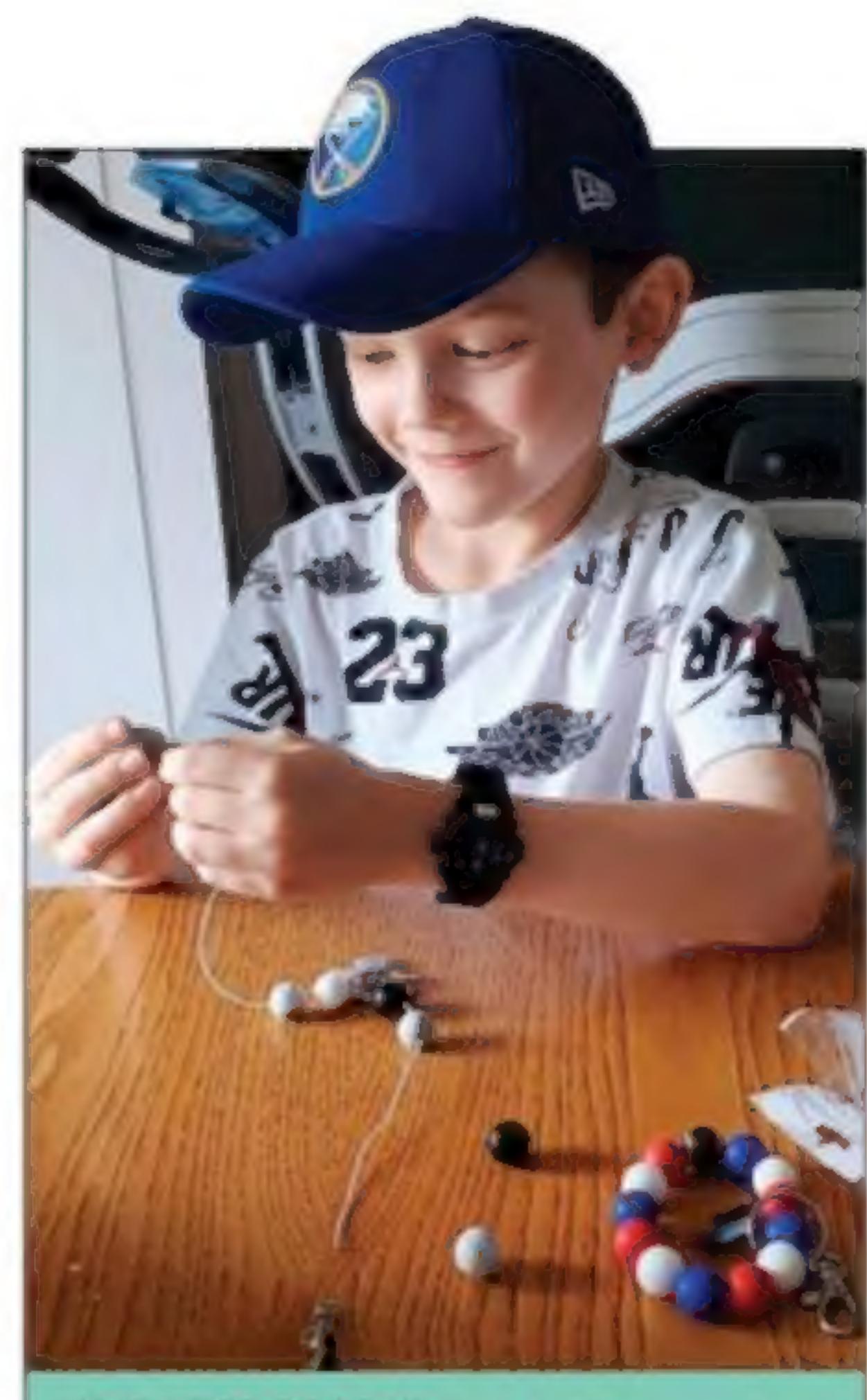
★ POLL *noun*: a survey of people's opinions ★

Political polls are opinion surveys. They're often conducted by research or media organizations to find out what people think about candidates or issues before an election.

In a poll, a sample group of people represents the larger U.S. population. Pollsters question them by phone, online, or face-to-face. They ask people

how they feel about a topic or whom they plan to vote for. The answers are used to find trends.

Polls aren't perfect. They're not accurate if a sample group isn't diverse or people don't respond honestly. At press time, most polls show Harris and Trump nearly tied, but we won't know if this is accurate until the election results are in.



READY TO SELL Christian and his sister, Irena, offer homemade crafts at a market in Derby, New York, on August 22.

KID OF THE MONTH

CRAFTY KID

Christian Ramos, 9, sells crafts to raise money for his favorite charity.

Nine-year-old Christian Ramos, of Hamburg, New York, is a big fan of his local football team, the Buffalo Bills. He's also into crafting. He has combined these two interests into a service project: making and selling Bills-themed souvenirs for charity.

"We started off with ornaments," Christian told TIME for Kids. "Then we did bracelets and coozies [sleeves that keep drinks cold]. We did magnets and then a billion other things," such as keychains and necklaces. He and his mom sell the items online and at craft fairs for \$5 each. Bracelets are best-sellers for Christian. He uses red and blue beads for the Bills team colors, adding white letter and number beads to insert "Go Bills" or players' names or jersey numbers.

Last year, sales topped \$1,500, which Christian donated to the Patricia Allen Fund. It benefits patients at John R. Oishei Children's Hospital (OCH), in Buffalo. Giving "makes me feel good," Christian says. He hopes to make an even larger donation this December.

HELPING KIDS

Christian started fundraising when he was 6. He loves his two cats, Ozzie and Gracie, so his first donation, of \$500, went to the cat adoption group Ten Lives Club. That's where his family got Gracie.

The following year, Christian donated to the Patricia Allen Fund. "I wanted to help the kids," Christian says. Plus, the fund is supported by Bills quarterback Josh Allen, in honor of his grandmother. "He's my favorite football player," Christian says.

Dr. Stephen Turkovich, president of OCH, says the

Patricia Allen Fund is "very much dedicated to critical care," helping kids recover from injuries and major illnesses. At the hospital, "we try to surround them with a whole team of specialists who are not only fixing them physically but also helping them socially and emotionally," he says. Donations like Christian's make this work possible.

GAME ON

Christian's fundraising goal for 2024 is to "beat last year." His little sister, Irena, is chipping in. According to Christian, he and Irena spend about 30 minutes a week crafting bracelets and other items for sale. Their mom, Stephanie Ramos, says they sometimes devote more time to the effort. "He really takes advantage when we have real bad snowy weather," she says. "They just camp out at the dining room table. They've got their beads all over the place!"

Christian accepts custom orders. "One of our customers wanted me to make, like, four Mahomes bracelets," he says. Patrick Mahomes is quarterback for the Kansas City Chiefs. The request makes Christian, a die-hard Bills fan, cringe. "They're kind of our rival team," his mom explains. "But he did it for the donation."

Raising money for the children's hospital is what matters most to Christian. With his sister's help, he has expanded his product range. "She makes Taylor Swift bracelets," Christian says. Swifties snatch them up.

By mid-September, Christian had already raised \$1,200. This puts him on track to make his biggest donation yet.

—By Jaime Joyce

INSPIRED? FLIP TO THE BACK!

Let Christian's story inspire you to take action in your community. Turn to page 8 for ideas about how you can raise funds for a cause you care about.

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FORECASTING WITH AI

Meteorologists are using artificial intelligence, or AI, to make better hurricane forecasts.

On October 9, Hurricane Milton became the fifth hurricane in 2024 to make landfall in the mainland United States. Storms like this grow more frequent and more intense. So meteorologists are hard at work forecasting and tracking them (see “Safety First”). Artificial intelligence is playing an important role in that process.

AI ADVANTAGES

For years, meteorologists have built digital models of storms. They use data gathered by planes, satellites, and buoys. These models can take hours to produce updated forecasts.

But AI models use vast amounts of data from previous storms to recognize patterns. They find trends that most humans can't. And they do so very quickly. This year, AI models made accurate storm-related predictions within seconds, and days in advance.

Matt Lanza is a meteorologist.

He's based in Houston, Texas. In the week before Hurricane Milton made landfall, Lanza says, older models accurately predicted where in Florida the storm would hit. But AI models “probably picked up on that potential outcome a good 12 to 18 hours before,” he says. Those hours can make a big difference to people preparing for a storm’s impact.

The AI program GraphCast predicted that Hurricane Beryl would hit Texas on July 8. A traditional model predicted it would hit Mexico. GraphCast was right. The team behind it won an engineering prize. One of the judges called GraphCast “a revolutionary advance.”

In September, the AI program AIFS predicted Hurricane Francine’s path as the storm hit Louisiana. Its accuracy gave Lanza the confidence to tell his viewers in Texas that the storm likely wouldn’t be an issue for them. “The consistency was incredible,” Lanza says.

ROOM TO GROW

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) uses AI in its forecasting. “The sophistication of AI has dramatically improved, and it continues to improve,” NHC deputy director Jamie Rhome told NBC Miami.

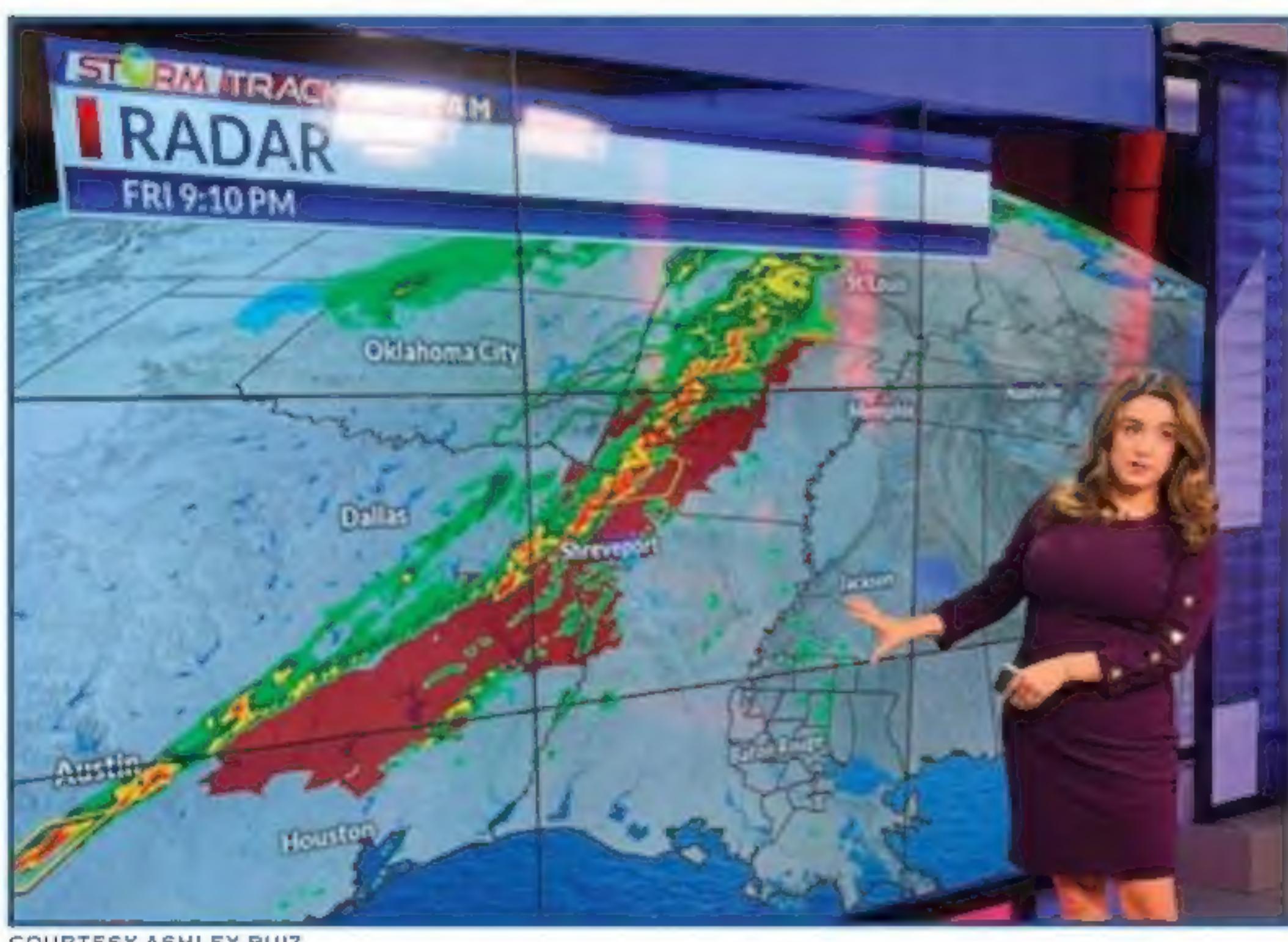
Despite the technology’s success, there are still hiccups. Lanza says that AI models struggle to predict a storm’s intensity and how much precipitation will fall. That’s why it’s important for meteorologists to use AI along with other forecasting tools. “We’re not turning the reins over to these things and just saying, ‘Make me a forecast,’” he says.

—By Andrew R. Chow for TIME,
adapted by TFK editors

Power Words

potential adjective: possible

revolutionary adjective: game-changing; groundbreaking

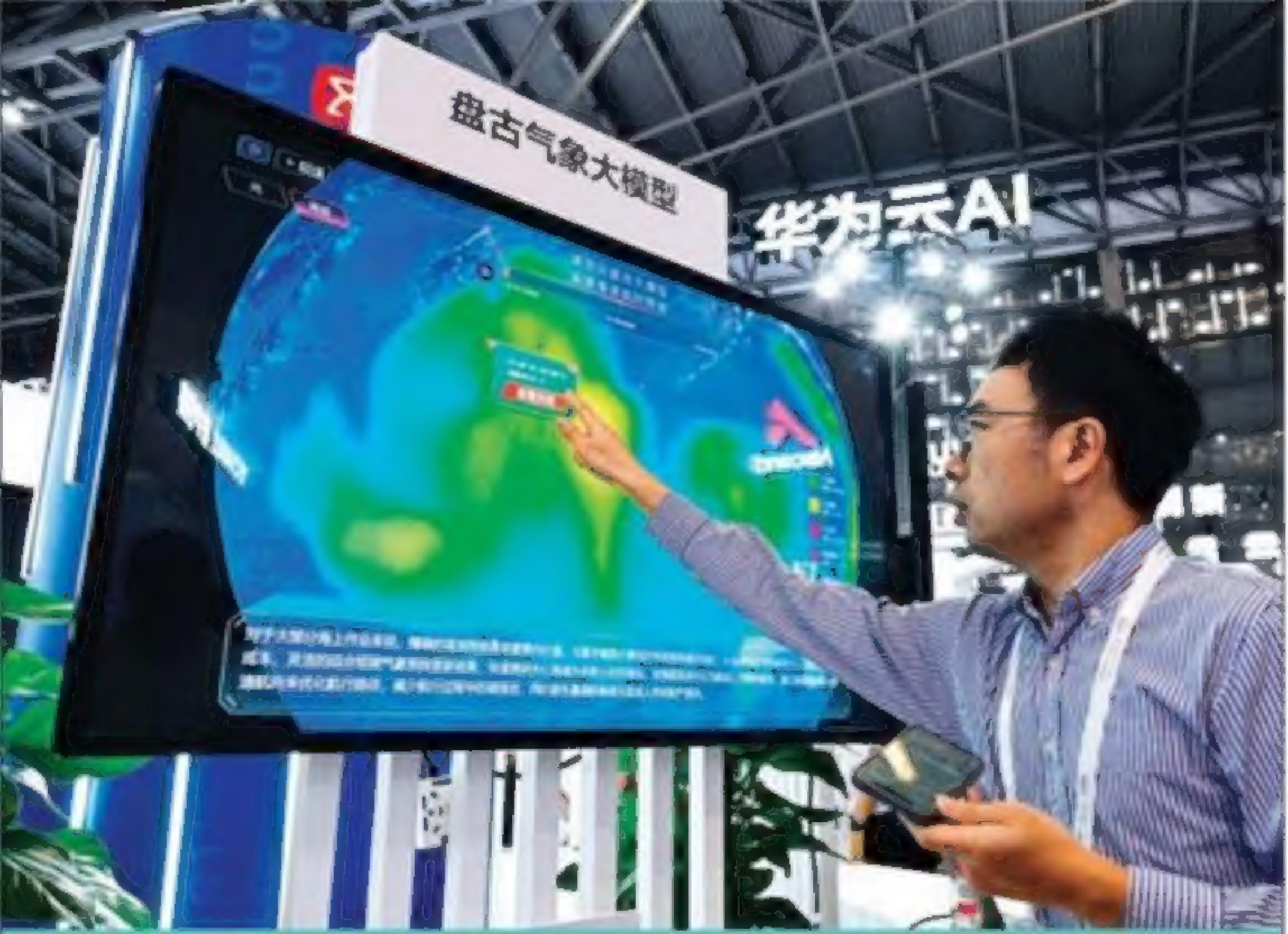


COURTESY ASHLEY RUIZ

SAFETY FIRST

Meteorologists are scientists who study the Earth’s atmosphere and weather patterns in order to make predictions. They can warn people about severe weather events.

Ashley Ruiz (left) is a meteorologist. She works in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In 2022, Ruiz told TFK Kid Reporter Cash Daniels that one of her favorite parts of the job is “getting out in the community. . . . Meeting the families who saw the forecast and were able to get to safety: It’s amazing, knowing I helped make that happen.”



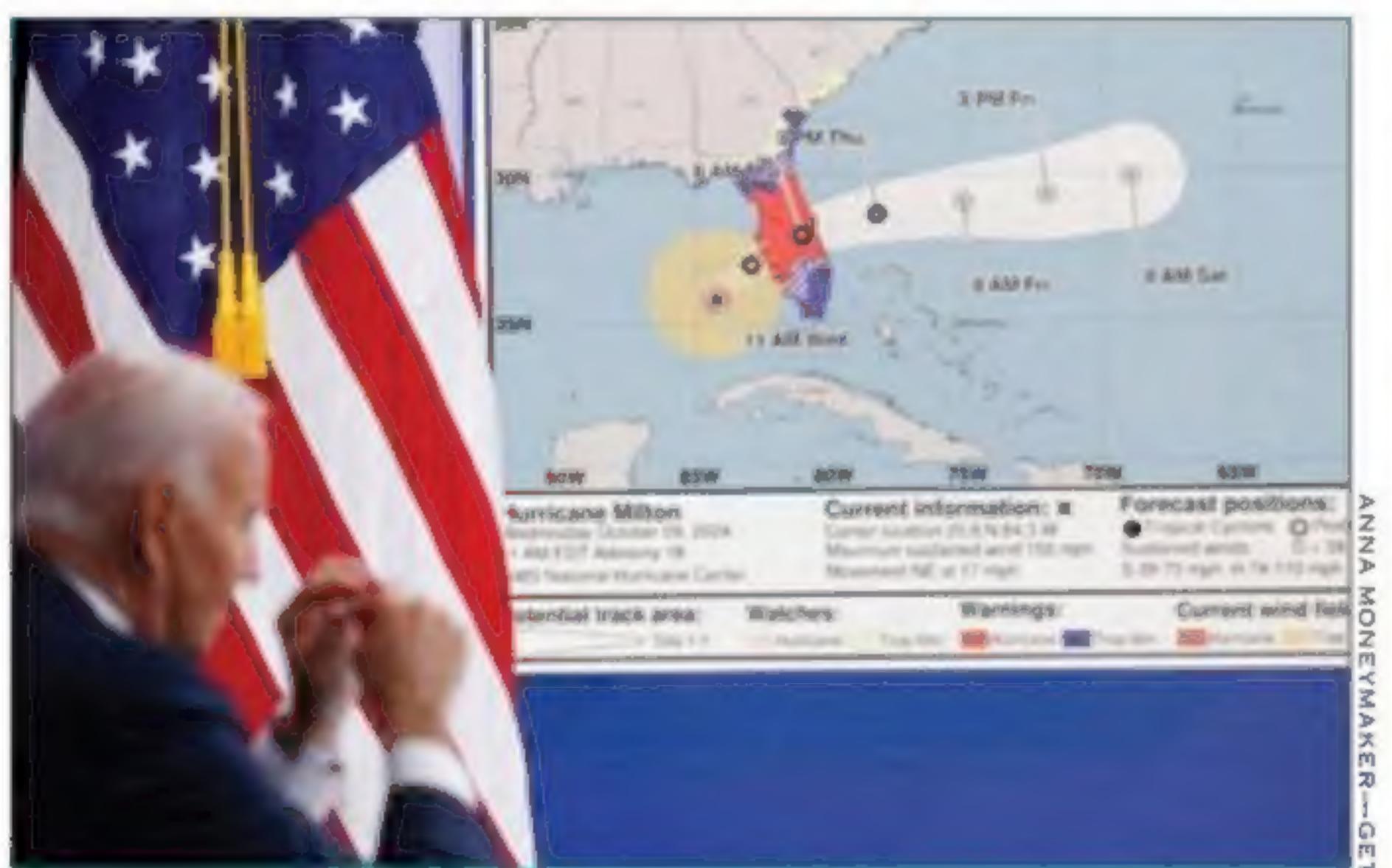
NEW TOOLS An AI weather model is displayed at an AI conference in 2023. AI weather models are changing how meteorologists work.

WANG ZHAO—AFP/GETTY IMAGES



SWIRLING CLOUDS Hurricanes are large enough to be seen from space.

NASA/GETTY IMAGES

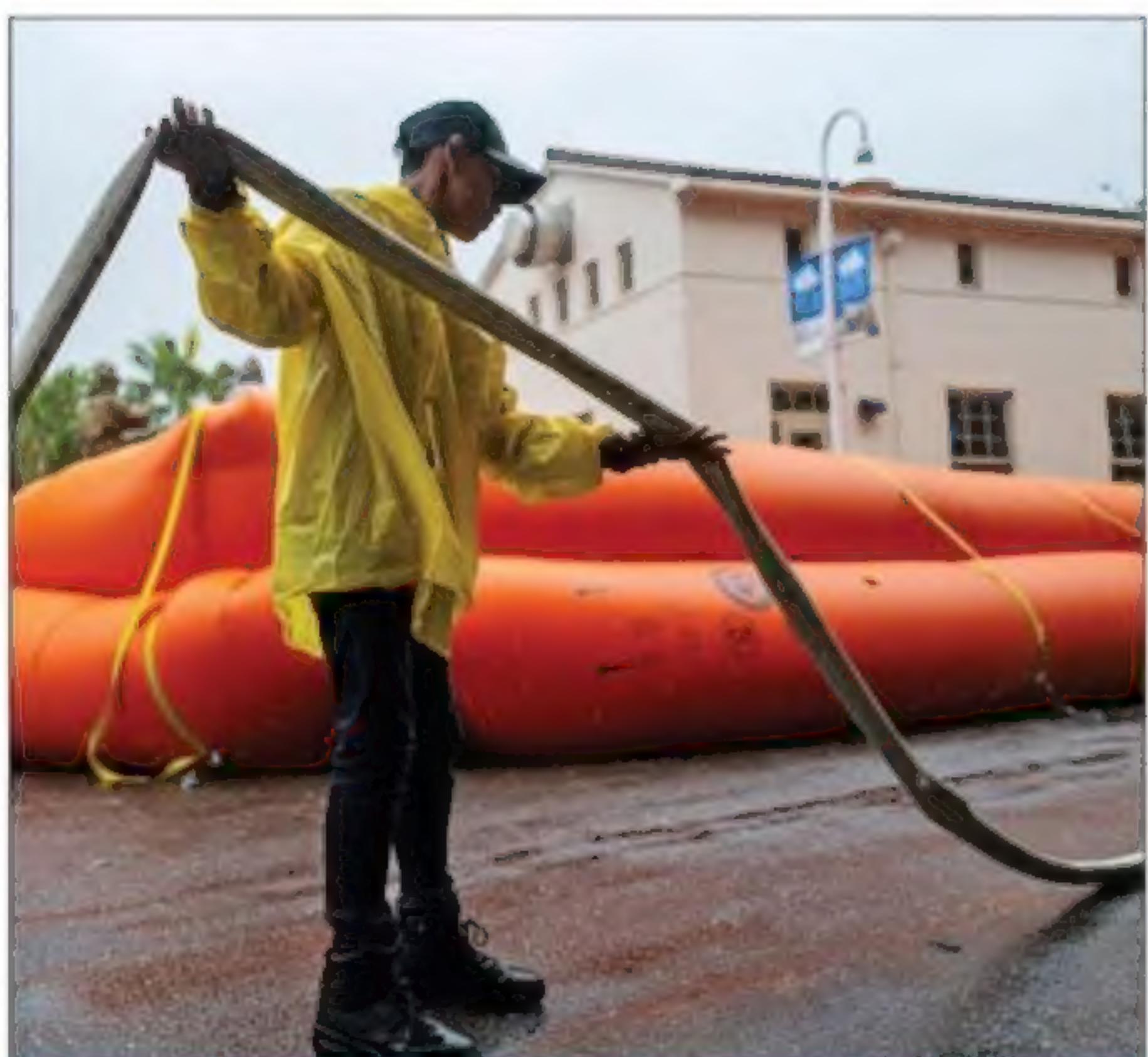


WEATHER UPDATE President Biden attends a White House briefing about Hurricane Milton on October 9.

ANNA MONEYMAKER—GETTY IMAGES



JOE RAEDLE—GETTY IMAGES



BE PREPARED A Tampa, Florida, resident helps set up a flood barrier in advance of Hurricane Milton.

SEEKING SAFETY Thousands of people were ordered to evacuate Florida's west coast before Hurricane Milton hit.



BE A SERVICE STAR

Join a community of kids who are making the world a better and brighter place. TFK Service Stars know that even the smallest actions can make a big impact.

MISSION: RAISE MONEY

It's fun to find ways to raise money for a good cause. From bake sales and lemonade stands to car washes and coin drives, there are lots of ways to rally financial support. Get creative! With the help of a trusted adult, you can raise funds for the causes you care about. Remember: You don't have to collect a huge sum to make a huge difference.

NEED INSPIRATION?

- Organize a coin drive at your school or a local business. How will you get the word out?
- Offer a service, such as shoveling snow, in return for a donation. What jobs do people need done in your area?
- Write a letter to an organization that's raising money for a cause you care about. Ask: How can I help?
- If someone wants to give you a gift, ask them to donate it to a good cause instead. What will you choose?
- Set aside some of every dollar you receive to donate to your cause. How much can you save?
- Host a lemonade stand or a bake sale to raise funds. What else can you make and sell?

Need help getting started? Talk to an adult or pair up with a friend to find an idea that feels right for you.

STARS SHINE BRIGHTER TOGETHER

When kids work together, they can achieve great things. This month's group idea is to organize a craft sale. Ask friends and classmates to use their talents to make crafts. Think about where you'll sell them. To what cause will you donate the proceeds?

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TELL US ABOUT IT!

We want to hear all about your efforts! Share your story at ti.me/stars or send it to tfkeditors@time.com for a chance to be featured in TIME for Kids.

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